

***Asplenium montanum* – *Heuchera villosa* Felsic Cliff Sparse Vegetation**

COMMON NAME	Mountain Spleenwort - Rock Alumroot Sparse Vegetation
SYNONYM	Southern Blue Ridge Felsic Cliff
PHYSIOGNOMIC CLASS	Sparse Vegetation (VII)
PHYSIOGNOMIC SUBCLASS	Consolidated rock sparse vegetation (VII.A)
PHYSIOGNOMIC GROUP	Sparsely vegetated cliffs (VII.A.1)
PHYSIOGNOMIC SUBGROUP	Natural/Semi-natural (VII.A.1.N)
FORMATION	Cliffs with sparse vascular vegetation (VII.A.1.N.a)

ALLIANCE *Asplenium montanum* Sparsely Vegetated Alliance

CLASSIFICATION CONFIDENCE LEVEL 2

USFWS WETLAND SYSTEM Upland

RANGE

Globally

This community occurs in the Blue Ridge and upper Piedmont of Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia.

Great Smoky Mountains National Park

This community was sampled on the Cades Cove and Mount Le Conte quadrangles. It is likely in other areas of the Park. On the Cades Cove quadrangle it was sampled from cliffs in the northeast portion of the quadrangle, along Rowans Creek (2200 feet) and Crooked Arm Branch (2960 feet). On the Mount Le Conte quadrangle, this community was sampled from cliffs northwest of Bullhead (3840 feet) and above Highway 441, in the vicinity of Fort Harry (3400 feet).

ENVIRONMENTAL DESCRIPTION

Globally

This community includes vertical rock faces associated with felsic, metamorphic and igneous geologies. These cliffs are typically dry, although small seepages may occur. They are usually shaded by trees rooted on ledges and by the surrounding forest.

Great Smoky Mountains National Park

See above

MOST ABUNDANT SPECIES

Globally

<u>Stratum</u>	<u>Species</u>
Herbaceous	rock, variable herbaceous species
Nonvascular	variable

Great Smoky Mountains National Park

<u>Stratum</u>	<u>Species</u>
See above	

CHARACTERISTIC SPECIES

Globally

Asplenium montanum, *Heuchera villosa*

Great Smoky Mountains National Park

See above

VEGETATION DESCRIPTION

Globally

This community has little vegetative cover, often with 90 percent of the rock surface unvegetated. Mosses (*e.g. Thuidium* spp., *Fissiden* spp., *Campylum* sp., *Bryoandersonia* sp., *Plagiomnium* sp.) and lichens can have moderate coverage, and vascular plants occur on ledges and rooted in cracks. *Asplenium montanum* and *Heuchera villosa* are characteristic components. Other typical species include *Agrostis perennans*, *Arisaema triphyllum*, *Aristolochia macrophylla*, *Asplenium trichomanes*, *Aster divaricatus*, *Cystopteris protrusa*, *Dryopteris marginalis*, *Hydrangea arborescens*, *Parthenocissus quinquefolia*, *Polypodium appalachianum*, and *Rubus canadensis*.

Great Smoky Mountains National Park

See above

OTHER NOTEWORTHY SPECIES

No information

CONSERVATION RANK G3G4

RANK JUSTIFICATION

DATABASE CODE CEGl004980

COMMENTS

Globally

This community is not large enough to be readily mappable but is a distinctive habitat for many plants.

Great Smoky Mountains National Park

This community is not mappable and usually occurs beneath a forest canopy.

REFERENCES

Schafale and Weakley 1990